

## City of Burlington / 2013 CDBG Application Form

Project Name: The Intervale Farms Program: Microenterprise Development for a Sustainable Burlington

Project Location / Address: 180 Intervale Road Burlington, VT 05401

Applicant Organization / Agency: Intervale Center

Mailing Address: 180 Intervale Road Burlington, VT 05401

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Contact: Travis Marcotte Title: Executive Director

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EIN #: 03-0329656

DUNS #: 138386391

**CDBG Funding Request: \$7,000**

### 1. Type of Organization

☐ Local Government

☐ For-Profit Organization

☐ Faith-Based Organization

☒ Non-Profit Organization (please provide copy of your  
IRS 501(c)(3) tax exemption letter)

☐ Institution of Higher Education

2. Conflict of Interest: ☒ Please complete and sign attached form.

3. List of Board of Directors: ☒ Please attach.

### Certification

To the best of my knowledge and belief, data in this proposal are true and correct.

I have been duly authorized to apply for this funding on behalf of this agency.

I understand that this grant funding is conditioned upon compliance with federal CDBG regulations.

I further certify that no contracts have been awarded, funds committed or construction begun on the proposed program, and that none will be prior to issuance of a Release of Funds by the Program Administrator.

  
Signature of Authorized Official

Travis Marcotte

Name of Authorized Official

Executive Director

Title

1/11/13  
Date

## ***I. Demonstrated Need***

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### **1. Project Narrative: Provide a description of the project/program to be funded with CDBG. (Refer to NOFA for required information in this section.)**

The Intervale Center requests \$10,000 to support the Farms Program, a farm business incubator program with a twenty year track record creating and retaining jobs in agriculture by supporting the development of successful farm businesses in the Intervale. Located in Burlington's Old North End, the Intervale Center manages 350 acres of land that is used by the community for passive and active recreation and is home to ten small farms that grow food for our community. The Farms Program, founded in 1990, a model farm business incubator nationally, has supported the development of dozens of farm businesses. Farmers lease 130 acres of prime agricultural land and gain access to equipment, technical support and a community of mentors that aid in their success. This program helps people from diverse socio-economic backgrounds overcome barriers to starting their own businesses in agriculture, which can be incredibly capital and labor intensive. The Farms Program helps eliminate these barriers by offering land and equipment rental at reduced rates and providing new farmers with the support they need to become successful farm managers.

The program operates as a business incubator. We solicit and receive applications, which include a full business plan, twice a year, and staff members work with applicants to help them complete financial, market and other analyses to ensure each business's success. Once accepted into the program, participants gain access to land and equipment, are matched with a mentor, and receive additional technical assistance support as needed. Each year, participants complete a self-evaluation and end of season review with staff, and all participants, including graduates who continue to lease land from the Center, submit annual reports to staff in the winter. These reports track financials, employment statistics, markets and other data. After five years, it is expected that participants "graduate" from more intensive technical support and either transition their business onto land of their own or enter into longer term, full rate leases with the Center.

### **2. Innovation**

#### **a. What new programs and/or services will be provided as a result of CDBG assistance?**

We are not planning to provide any new programs or services in 2013-2014.

#### **b. How will existing programs and/or services be expanded as a result of CDBG assistance? Use actual numbers to demonstrate expansion.**

We do not anticipate any expansion of programs or services in 2013-2014.

#### **c. Are there other programs in the community that address similar issues? Yes**

**If Yes, how is this proposal different?**

Yes, there is one other program in Burlington that helps beginning farmers start farm microenterprises. The Association of Africans Living in Vermont runs the New Farms for New Americans program, which is a refugee agriculture project that focuses on community gardening, collective growing and marketing. For five years, the Intervale Center provided agricultural production and business development support to this program's participants, and we continue to work with the most independent growers enrolled in this program as part of our beginning farmer work.

## ***II. Proposed Outcomes***

### **1. How will this project/program impact individuals and contribute to the City's anti-poverty strategy?**

The Farms Program reduces poverty in Burlington by creating and retaining jobs and supporting the economic viability of local farms. This program provides a platform for new, often limited-resource farmers to grow their businesses in a supportive environment, helping them overcome many of the common barriers to entering into agriculture: access to land, equipment, capital, training and community.

**2. List your goals/objectives, activities to implement and expected outcomes (# of units, # of individuals, etc.)**

Goal/Objective	Activity Funded	Outcomes
Create economic opportunities in an eligible geographic area	Business development, evaluation, and technical assistance to applicants and incubators	4 applicants receive site visits and support; 2 applicants develop business plans; and 1 new business is created
Create economic opportunities in an eligible geographic area	Respond to emergency inquiries; maintain irrigation lands and roads; oversee mowing and plowing; perform additional services	10 businesses access farm land

### ***III. Experience / Organizational Capacity***

**1. What is your agency's mission, and how do the proposed activities fit with your mission?**

The Intervale Center is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization whose mission is to strengthen community food systems. Since 1988, we have pursued this mission by preserving and managing 350 acres of land, supporting viable farms, increasing access to local food, improving soil fertility, protecting water quality through stream bank restoration and educating our community about agriculture and healthy food.

The Intervale Center is known as a national leader in farm business incubation and business planning support. In the last five years, we have worked with more than 100 farmers throughout Vermont through our agricultural development programs. The Intervale Center's Farms Program has supported the growth of dozens of farms since 1990. Farmers lease over 130 acres of prime agricultural land in the Intervale and grow vegetables, fruits and small livestock. In 2011, the 12 independent farm businesses in the Intervale sold product through direct and wholesale markets around Burlington and employed over 50 people.

The Farms Program fulfills the Intervale Center's mission by incubating and supporting sustainable farm businesses, creating and retaining jobs and providing training in agriculture and entrepreneurship to new farmers. In combination with other Intervale Center initiatives, the Farms Program has effectively established a viable agricultural economy within the city limits of Burlington, adjacent to one of Vermont's poorest neighborhoods, and revitalized an important economic and recreational corridor for the City and its residents.

**2. How long has your agency been in operation?**

The Intervale Center was founded in 1988 and has been operating for 25 years.

**3. What programs and services do you offer?**

The Intervale Center provides the following programs and services:

- Farm Viability Programs offer statewide business planning, marketing and technical assistance for both established and beginning farmers and local food entrepreneurs. In 2012, we worked with 45 refugee and immigrant farmers and market gardeners, 20 established farmers and 25 beginning farmers, and we marketed over \$400,000 worth of local food to members of our community.
- Land Stewardship Programs care for 350 acres of land in the Intervale, which is open to the community for passive and active year round recreation; and grow native trees and shrubs for riparian restoration projects statewide. Our native tree nursery planted 25,000 stems in 2012.
- Community Engagement Programs celebrate local food and farming with thousands of community members; and provide gleaned and rescued food to food insecure people. In 2012, Summervale was attended by over 5,000 people, and we worked with partners to create myriad opportunities for

people to deepen their connections with local food, land and farmers in order to change local buying and eating habits.

**4. If you plan to pay for staff with CDBG funding, describe what they do in relation to the specific service(s) / activity(ies) in your Project Narrative.**

<b>Specific Service / Activity</b>	<b>Position/Title</b>	<b>Work Related to CDBG-Funded Activity</b>	<b># of Hours per Week spent on this Specific Service / Activity</b>	<b>% of Hours per Week spent on this Specific Service / Activity to be paid with CDBG</b>
Site visits and technical assistance for 4 Farms Program applicants	Beginning Farmer Specialist, Maggie Donin	Receive phone calls & send information to prospective clients; coordinate meetings; give tours; provide information; conduct follow up	2	0%
Business development, evaluation and technical assistance for applicants and incubators	Beginning Farmer Specialist, Maggie Donin	Provide guidance, feedback & assistance to applicant; conduct check-ins & end-of-year evaluations; identify appropriate resources	4.0	50%
Land Management Services	Facilities Manager, Rob Hunt	Respond to emergency inquiries; maintain irrigation lines and roads; oversee mowing & plowing; perform additional services	5.0	85%
Reporting & Documentation	Beginning Farmer Specialist, Maggie Donin	Distribute and collect Farm Report forms; tabulate results; document vital information	2.5	50%
Farms Program Management, including Lease Management	Executive Director, Travis Marcotte and Finance Manager, Jonathan Guy	Provide leadership for all program activities & supervise Specialist; provide leasing	3	0%

**5. Explain how your agency has the capacity to carry out the proposed activity (i.e., staff qualifications and years of experience related to this type of activity, etc.)**

The Intervale Center has been managing the Farms Program since 1990, serving dozens of new businesses. In the past 10 years, 17 businesses have started as part of the Farms Program, and 13 of those are still in business today; though some are still located in Burlington, others are farming land in Chittenden County and beyond.

Travis Marcotte, the Intervale Center's Executive Director, has been at the Intervale Center since 2006 and has an extensive background in agricultural development. He works closely with Maggie Donin, Beginning

Farmer Specialist, who administers the Farms Program. Maggie joined the Intervale Center in 2012, has experience in community development and has managed her own farm business for several seasons. She oversees the Farms Program and provides business planning, coaching and resource matching for new farmers throughout Vermont. Rob Hunt, Facilities Manager, has been managing the Center's land and physical assets since 2010 and knows the land and farmers of the Intervale well.

6. Have you received Federal or State grant funds in the past three years? Yes

7. Were the activities funded by these sources successfully completed? Yes

#### ***IV. Proposed Low & Moderate Income Beneficiaries / Commitment to Diversity***

1. Will the program target any specific group of people? (check one below):

☐ Abused Children                      ☐ Elderly (62 years +)                      ☐ People with AIDS  
☐ Battered Spouses                      ☐ Homeless Persons                      ☐ Illiterate Adults  
☐ People with Severe Disabilities

2. For your proposed project, please estimate how the Burlington residents will break out into the following income categories. Use the Income Table at <http://www.burlingtonvt.gov/cedo/cdbg/2012-HUD-Income-Limits>.

Service / Activity	Unduplicated Total # of Burlington HH / Persons to be Served	# Extremely Low-Income	# Low-Income	# Moderate-Income	# Above Moderate-Income
Site visits by 4 potential Farms Program applicants	4	0	2	1	1
Business Development, Evaluation; & Technical Assistance for Applicants & Incubators	0*	0	0	0	0
Land Management Services	16	1	2	9	4
Farms Program Reporting & Documentation	0*	0	0	0	0

\*The same clients who receive site visits and/or leasing services will receive business planning and/or documentation services.

3. Explain how the target population is selected, qualified and monitored.

Applicants enter our program largely through word of mouth. We conduct outreach through our contacts at the University of Vermont, Association of Africans Living in Vermont and current Intervale-based farm businesses. Applicants must have at least three years farming experience, have never owned their own farm business in the U.S., and be able to produce a business plan with staff support. Once enrolled, incubator farmers are expected to check in periodically with program staff and have regular contact with their mentor. In the fall, they complete a self-evaluation and review process and often revisit financials and other aspects of their business plan with program staff.

4. How do you ensure that your programs are accessible to all, inclusive and culturally appropriate?

As a program of a 501(c)(3) organization, the Farms Program complies with federal equal opportunity hiring practices. The Intervale Center's board recruitment is initiated by a nominating committee that aims to create a diverse board. The Farms Program applicant process is rigorous, but staff members are responsive to the needs of individual applicants. Our work with the Association of Africans Living in Vermont's New Farms for New Americans program has also helped us make connections with interpreters and other resources that have helped us work with individuals with limited English skills.

**5. What steps has your organization/board taken in the past year to become more culturally competent?**

In 2012, Intervale Center staff focused on shifting workplace culture to be more inclusive of different work and learning styles and more flexible for workers with familial obligations. All new staff complete sexual harassment training.

## ***V. Budget / Financial Feasibility***

**1. Project Budget**

<b>Line Item</b>	<b>CDBG Funds</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Total</b>
Site visits by 4 potential Farms Program applicants	\$0	\$2,290	\$2,290
Business Development, Evaluation; & Technical Assistance for Applicants & Incubators	\$2,290	\$2,290	\$4,580
Land Management Services	\$3,279	\$3,279	\$6,558
Farms Program Reporting & Documentation	\$1,431	\$1,431	\$2,862
Farms Program Management, including Lease Management	\$0	\$5,810	\$5,810
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$7,000</b>	<b>\$15,100</b>	<b>\$22,100</b>

## 2. Funding Sources

	Project		Agency	
	Current (2013)	Projected (2013)	Current (2013)	Projected (2013)
CDBG	\$ 5,450 award	\$ 7,000 ask	\$ 5,450	\$7,000
State (specify)	\$0	\$0	\$155,364	\$155,364
Federal (specify)	\$0	\$0	\$51,612	\$51,612
United Way	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Private (specify) – For Project - \$5,000 People's United Foundation \$1,500 Key Bank  For Agency – Please request a full list of pending and secured grants	\$6,500	\$9,500	\$557,480	\$560,480
Program Income	\$5,600	\$5,600	\$786,104	\$786,104
Other (specify)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$17,550</b>	<b>\$22,100</b>	<b>\$1,556,010</b>	<b>\$1,560,560</b>

\*Our 2013 fiscal year began January 1.

### 3. Of the total project cost, what percentage will be financed with CDBG?

$$\frac{\$7,000}{\text{CDBG Funding}} \div \frac{\$22,100}{\text{Total Project Cost}} = \frac{31.67\%}{\text{Percentage}}$$

### 4. Of the total project cost, what would be the total cost per person?

$$\frac{\$7,000}{\text{CDBG Funding}} \div \frac{20}{\text{\# Proposed Beneficiaries}} = \frac{\$350}{\text{Cost Per Person}}$$

### 5. Why should CDBG resources, as opposed to other sources of funding, be used for this project?

The Farms Program provides an important microenterprise development resource for the Burlington community in a neighborhood revitalization zone. It supports the Consolidated Plan goal: "A prosperous Burlington economy provides all Burlington residents with access to livable wage jobs, to the education and training that qualify them for those jobs, to business ownership opportunities, and to the supports necessary to access those opportunities." Furthermore, the Burlington Legacy Project identified the need for a stronger local economy through promotion of small businesses, meaningful work for all citizens, increased local self-reliance and access to healthy food.

**6. Describe your use of community resources. Include any resources not listed in your budget.**  
The Farms Program relies on program "graduates" – farmers in the Intervale that are no longer incubator businesses – to act as volunteer mentors for new incubator farmers. We refer participants to a host of partnering agricultural development programs, such as UVM Extension, which keeps our costs low by allowing us to piggyback on other programming. Furthermore, the Intervale Center relies on volunteers, who contribute hundreds of hours of work each year; many volunteers help us maintain facilities and grounds.

**7. Has your organization experienced any significant changes in funding levels during the past year?**

No. The Intervale Center remains committed to increasing revenue generated through the sale of products and services as well as increasing the proportion of revenue generated by community contributions.

**8. What cost-cutting measures has your organization implemented?** None in the last year.

## ***VI. Community Support / Participation***

**1. What other organizations or key individuals (if any) have given support to this project?**

Collaborators with the Farms Program include the University of Vermont, the Agency of Agriculture, Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, Rutland Area Farm and Food Link, Vermont Land Trust, Association of Africans Living in Vermont and the Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont.

**2. How are the community or program participants involved in decision-making and/or identifying the program need, design and/or evaluation?**

Intervale farmers assist with the direction of the Farms Program through monthly meetings, continuous feedback to staff and board members, yearly program evaluations, ad hoc committees and program policy development. Established growers also review incubator applicant business plans and help decide which new farmers should enroll in the program.

## ***VII. Readiness to Implement***

**1. Is the project ready to begin on July 1, 2013 and be completed by June 30, 2014?** Yes

**2. List any conditions (i.e., obtaining permits, availability of other funding, etc.) that may affect your ability to begin or complete this project.** None

## ***VIII. Impact / Evaluation***

**1. Describe how this project will effectively measure outcomes.**

Success is defined by whether or not a new business has been created, and if the managers of current incubator businesses are reporting increased confidence in their ability to make good business decisions. We measure these outcomes through self-evaluation with incubators each fall.

**2. What strategies will you implement to collect the data necessary to analyze your results?**

We implement a formal self-evaluation and business plan review process with incubator farm managers in the late fall. This process often results in the creation of a "to do" list for farmers so they can continue to develop the skills they need to be successful.

**3. How are clients better off as a result of your program?**

Our clients gain the skills they need to make good business management decisions, which ultimately makes them successful, regardless of whether they start or maintain a farm business in the Intervale.



## ***IX. Sustainability***

### **1. How will this project have a long-term benefit to the City of Burlington? If this project ends, will that benefit continue?**

Long-term benefits to Burlington include:

- The revitalization of the Intervale as an agricultural business incubator and an educational and recreational resource that increases quality of life for all the City's residents;
- Organic food production increasing every year—with Intervale farms producing over 1 million pounds of produce and growing;
- Job creation capacity within the city limits on an otherwise un-developable piece of land and in an economically depressed neighborhood;
- A growing, sustainable local economy; and
- Development of community assets that support local food businesses and protect critical natural and cultural resources.

If the project ends, farmers in the Farms Program will certainly benefit from what they have learned through their participation. However, the Intervale Center is a unique asset to the City of Burlington, and its benefits cannot be underestimated.

### **2. Provide evidence of long-term support for this project.**

The Farms Program has operated for 22 years, providing services to nearly 50 new farm businesses; the majority of these businesses are still operating today. The Intervale Center has worked over the years to minimize program expense and maximize program impact. As such, we focus on serving a small number of applicants and participants each year.

The importance of the Farms Program and Intervale-based farms generally to the reputation of Burlington as a sustainable city and to the quality of life of Burlington residents is tremendous. At the farmers' market, coop, restaurants, schools, the food shelf and other social service agencies, Burlington residents procure fresh, local, organically grown produce, food grown with dignity less than a mile from City Hall, because of the Farms Program. The Intervale Center continues to push local food market development, is home to the state's first gleaning and food rescue project and is an active member of the state's Farm-to-Plate Initiative.

### **3. If CDBG funding ends, will the project be able to continue?**

The Intervale Center's Farms Program is supported by ongoing grant support and farmer fees. We have a track record of twenty years in the business, which demonstrates our ability to raise necessary funds to sustain operations and deliver a positive impact for Burlington. The Farms Program has moved closer to self-sufficiency by transferring ownership of equipment and greenhouses to an LLC, whose membership includes the Center and farmers at the Intervale. This transfer reduces the Center's administrative overhead, builds equity for farmers and ensures the availability of affordable equipment and greenhouse space for all Intervale farms. Similarly, the Center continues to work toward the maximization of its assets to ensure that farmers cover the true costs of farming in the Intervale; however, core funding like that provided by CDBG is what enables us to provide support for limited resource applicants and start-up businesses, the kind of support that will always require grant funding.